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A Halloween Scheme

It Was Well Planned and Worked Well

By F. A. MITCHEL

"I wish," said Mrs. Edgerton to her friend, Mrs. Tisdale, "that your Alice would fall in love with my Frank. A young bachelor is so beset by temptations. If Frank were married I should not have to keep worrying about him all the time. He is out every evening, sometimes till morning. I don't know where he goes or what he is doing. I never go to sleep till he comes in, and thus I spend hours worrying."

"You have no need to worry about your boy," said the other. "Frank is simply doing what most young men of fortune do at his age—he is enjoying the novelty of things. When that novelty wears off he will become engrossed in more serious matters."

"Would you object to a match between him and Alice?"

"On the contrary, I should welcome it. We have little or nothing to leave Alice, and I should be glad to see her married to a man whose income would preclude the probability of her coming to want."

"Suppose," rejoined Mrs. Edgerton thoughtfully, "we lay a trap to bring them together. We could be useless for me to say to Frank that I wished him to marry Alice, and even if he acceded to my desire it would be equally useless for you to try to force Alice to accept him. If we could contrive to throw them together I would have great hopes of Frank falling in love with her, she is so attractive in every way. But I have my doubts about Alice. It seems to me that she is too serious, too thoughtful, too good for a man of the world like Frank."

"My daughter is very impressionable. There is also a good deal of romance in her nature. If we could bring about some episode by which Frank would appear to be a hero in her eyes we would win our point, or if it could be made to appear that fate intends him for her husband that would have the same effect."

"I have it!" exclaimed the other, speaking suddenly a thought that flashed upon her. "Halloween will be here in another week. I will give a Halloween party. I will invite Alice, and you must come too. We will concoct some scheme to make it appear that fate intends her and Frank for each other."

Mrs. Tisdale made no objection to this, though she would have preferred that the scheme be worked out at her own home, since it would be more becoming that the man should come to the woman rather than the woman to the man. But Mrs. Edgerton possessed a country place especially suitable to a house party. It had been closed for the season, but could be reopened.

Mrs. Edgerton and Mrs. Tisdale were especially adapted to carry out such a scheme as they had in mind. Both had been married very young and had jumped almost from girlhood into a gay world. Neither had yet passed out of the forties, nor had either lost her adaptation for playing a part.

"Mamma," said Alice Tisdale, looking at her mother through a pair of eyes to remind one of a deep pool darkened by surrounding rocks and overhanging verdure, "do you really think there is anything in Halloween?"

"Why do you ask, Alice?"

"Well, we are going to Mrs. Edgerton's country place for a Halloween party, and I would like to know before we go whether the belief or fancy or whatever it is that one may see a future husband or wife is all rubbish or whether there is anything in it."

"We don't know, dear, where superstition ends and a legitimate faith begins. There are certainly many wonderful things in the world that we call supernatural. Some of them may be referable to natural laws of which we have no knowledge."

Mrs. Tisdale was well satisfied with herself at this method of answering her daughter's question. She would not intentionally deceive her child, and she felt that in her reply she had spoken nothing that was not true. What she said made a marked impression on Alice. She went to the library and, taking down a book on strange customs, turned to Halloween and read of girls seeing the faces of their future husbands in looking glasses, the setting aloft of candles on a river and other such methods of determining their future. If she did not believe in their efficacy she certainly did not disbelieve.

that they had not been invited to a bridge or a billiard party, but to a Halloween party, and they must accept the situation. With this they sallied forth, some to sit in a summer house and smoke, while others, respecting their hostess' wishes, wandered over the place. Lights were seen on the bosom of the river, indicating that some of the girls had brought candles and set them afloat.

Frank Edgerton had been requested by his mother to set an example to the other men guests by entering into the spirit of the affair and go forth in search of adventure. He strolled alone on the river bank watching the lighted candles and lighted a cigar, resolving to smoke it to the end before returning to the house, for he was bent on pleasing his mother and feared that he would return too soon. The night was not cold, the stars were bright, and Frank was content to remain in the open so long as the case required.

Suddenly from bushes, perhaps a hundred yards from him, a light flashed. It was not the season for fireflies, and even if it had been no fireflies could give so great a light. It at once occurred to Frank that it had been set by a human being. Either some of the men or girl guests were seeking an adventure. If a girl Frank was ready to accommodate her. He walked toward the place where he had seen the light, but when he reached it found nothing but bushes. While looking about him the light flashed again, but from a different location. Frank went to the new spot with the same result as before.

It was evident that some one, probably a girl, was bent on leading him a game of hide and seek. He was quite ready to play it and waited for another flash. It came, and this time, instead of walking leisurely toward it, he ran. Nevertheless the result was the same as before. He found no one. For some time the light flashed from different points, and yet the trend was in one direction. Though Frank made violent dashes for it, when he reached the point where he had seen it he found only silence and a low growth of evergreens. Once, instead of seeing a flash, he heard a low laugh. This settled the point as to the sex of the hider, for it was a woman's laugh. Frank ran toward the place from which it seemed to come, but one has no sense by which to judge of the direction of sound, and when he reached the illuminated place the light was flashed in an entirely different one.

Finally Frank followed a flash, and though he found darkness he touched something human. Resolving that whoever had been leading him should not escape him, he threw his arms about it and held it fast. That it was feminine was evident from the apparel.

"Let me go," said a girl, struggling.

"Not until I have learned who you are. You have been leading me a fine dance, and I must at least get a glimpse of your face before I will release you. Come, flash your light!"

"I have no light. It is you who have been leading me, Mr. Edgerton. Though I can't see your face, I recognize your voice."

"Do you mean to tell me that you have not a flashlight?"

"I have not."

"This is very strange. You are Miss Tisdale, are you not?"

"I am."

No one knows whether Frank Edgerton during this dialogue continued to hold Alice Tisdale in his arms or released her. Alice at once became impressed with a fancy that on this Halloween a will-o'-the-wisp had conducted her to her future husband, and, though she was a modest girl, it is quite possible that she did not continue her efforts to free herself.

Later the two walked into the house together. Most of the guests had returned. Some were telling stories they had invented of marvelous happenings, some admitting disappointments. Alice Tisdale said nothing. Perhaps she was waiting for Frank Edgerton to tell her experience. But Frank held his peace. He was puzzled. He believed that Alice told the truth when she denied having a flashlight. Alice was wondering if she had met a real Halloween experience.

Mrs. Edgerton and Mrs. Tisdale when their children entered were sitting together chatting apparently on commonplace topics, for they showed no animation. The others were interested in one another's stories of their experiences. Edgerton turned to Alice and looked at her inquiringly, as much as to say, "Is it possible that so retiring a girl could have led me such a dance?" She dropped her eyes under his gaze. He wished he was back in the dark place where he had seized her and was again holding her in his arms.

"Come out on the porch with me," he said, "and let us have a look at the stars."

Whether they looked at the stars or not nobody but themselves knows, but certain it is that within a month they were engaged.

What Mrs. Edgerton and Mrs. Tisdale were saying to each other so quietly when the son of the one and the daughter of the other entered the house was this:

"Did your flashlight work well?" asked Mrs. Edgerton.

"Splendidly. But Frank almost caught me several times."

"You had the hardest part. I had no trouble with Alice at all. I led her along like a lamb to the slaughter. After flashing my light I had plenty of time to get out of the way. The electric lamps are blinding, and I don't think she dared go very fast in the dark."

"It's lucky we had our course well laid out. As it was, I found it difficult to draw Frank to the point designated."

"I wonder if we have succeeded."

"That remains to be seen."

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Titles of Victor Emmanuel.
The author of "Rejected Addresses" preserved the name of a certain Mr. Pole, as the longest imaginable, in the well known lines:

Bless every man possessed of ought to give.
Long may Long Wellensley Tynley Long Pole live.

but Mr. Pole's name was as nothing to the titles of the king of Italy, many of which are derived from the older kingdom of Sardinia. Where his titles end it might be difficult to say, but they begin, king of Italy, Sardinia, France, Spain, England, Jerusalem, Greece, Alexandria and Hamburg, ruler of the midway sea, master of the deep and king of the earth.—Christian Science Monitor.

Probate Order.
State of Michigan, the Probate Court for the County of Shiawassee.

At a session of the Probate Court for said County held at the Probate Office in the City of Owosso on Tuesday the 19th day of October in the year one thousand nine hundred and fifteen.

Present, Matthew Bush Judge of Probate.
In the matter of the estate of William H. Halstead deceased.

On reading and filing the petition of Marie Halstead praying that administration of said estate may be granted to the petitioner or some other suitable person.

It is ordered that the 15th day of November next, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, at said Probate office, be assigned for hearing said petition.

And it is further ordered that a copy of this order be published three successive weeks, previous said day of hearing, in THE OWOSSO TIMES a newspaper printed and circulating in said County of Shiawassee.

MATTHEW BUSH,
Judge of Probate.

CLARENCE GALLOWAY,
Probate Register.

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